

Mr. Michael S. Dotson #281357

NWCX Site Two, L15-6

960 State Route 212

Tiptonville, Tennessee 38079

Received & Inspected

NOV 24 2014

November 17, 2014

FCC Mail Room

Federal Communications Commission

Attn: Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary

445 12th Street SW, Room TW-B204

Washington, DC 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Secretary Dortch,

Please find enclosed a public comment for *WC Docket Number 12-375*. It is my wish that my comment will be made part of the public docket.

I would like to respectfully address the Federal Communications Commission(FCC) regarding intrastate(in-state) telephone rates in the State of Tennessee. I would first like to state for the record that as of February 11, 2014 our interstate(long-distance) telephone rates have been capped at \$0.21 cents per minute. This is a drastic decrease from the previous \$15.00 to \$30.00 we previously paid for a 30-minute telephone call. Words cannot express, nor can the begin to even put into context, how grateful we are for the FCC taking action regarding interstate telephone rates. However, there is still a dire need to address the intrastate telephone rates in the State of Tennessee.

Currently, in the State of Tennessee our families are charged an outrageous *ancillary fee* of \$25.00 per every hundred dollars they put on an inmate telephone account. Many of our local telephone companies refuse to allow families in their districts to accept collect telephone calls from our Global Tel*Link telephone system because of the outrageous fees charged to the telephone companies themselves, as well as their customers. They cite liability issues as the reason for denying families the right to accept collect telephone calls from our prison telephone system. This forces the families to set up pre-paid telephone accounts that charge outrageous *ancillary fees* for their use.

In addition, our intrastate(in-state) telephone calls are still very outrageous. We are forced to pay a flat-rate connection fee of \$1.77. Then we are charged between \$0.10 to \$0.18 cents per minute depending on where in the state our families are located. Intrastate(in-state) telephone calls make up over 85% of the calls from our prison telephone system.

It is outrageous that our families are forced to pay exorbitant amounts of money in order to remain in contact with their family and loved ones. These pernicious business practices should not be allowed to continue. These telephone companies are being allowed to prey on the most vulnerable demographic of our American society. A majority of the prison population have been declared paupers and infamous by the criminal justice system. Furthermore, their families are generally living at or below the National poverty level. It appears that society is advocating for "the allowance of kicking a person who is already on his knees" struggling to get back up. Our American Government is designed to step in and protect those who are unable to protect themselves when they are in need of assistance. Telephone communication for prisoners oftentimes serves as a ministry of restoration to reconnect and restore

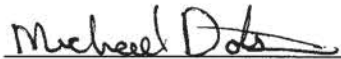
No. of Copies rec'd 0
List ABCDE

relationships they have neglected or destroyed due to their poor choices and decisions. In reality, almost 98% of the American prison population will be returned back to society in the next ten(10) years. The capitalistic policies of our current American Justice System are making it increasingly difficult for prisoners to get back on their feet. In many cases it is creating a sentiment of anger and resentment towards our American Government. These are the same individuals that will become your next door neighbor some day. Capitalism within the Criminal Justice System is the reason for the explosion of religious radicalism of many individuals. A blind man can also see the reason for the explosion of cellular telephones being smuggled in the American Prison System.

The Federal Communications Commission(FCC) has an opportunity to do its part to make a bad situation a little bit better for one of the most vulnerable sects of our American Society. I would like to respectfully request that the FCC strongly consider capping the *intrastate(in-state)* telephone rates at \$0.10 to \$0.12 cents per minute with no connection fees. In addition, the FCC should cap *Ancillary fees* at a percentage of the amount of money placed on an inmates telephone account. Regardless of the amount deposited on the inmate account, there should be a maximum amount allowed to be charged for an *ancillary fee*. Any *ancillary fees* charged to local telephone companies for connecting with their customers **MUST** be eliminated. They are punishing the families of incarcerated individuals for communicating with their loved ones. In addition, the prison telephone companies are extorting local telephone companies that are forced to pay their outrageous fees simply because they have individuals within their area who have family members who are currently incarcerated.

It is time for the Federal Communications Commission(FCC) to take action to regulate these pernicious business practices. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me at the address above. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Mr. Michael S. Dotson #281357

Cc: File